



News Release

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Teams from West Virginia, Virginia take top prizes in mine rescue skills championship

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration announced today that the Nationwide Coal Mine Rescue Skills Championship, hosted by the [Mining Technology and Training Center](#) in Prosperity, Pennsylvania, drew [24 mine rescue teams](#) from across the country for two days of competition. The winners were announced on Oct. 9, following two days of simulated emergency exercises that involved smoke exploration and ventilation, firefighting, fire hose management, gas detection, air measurements, use of breathing apparatus and a written test.

The three teams with the fastest times took the top prizes. First place went to Alpha Natural Resources’ Coal River East from West Virginia, second place to Alpha Natural Resources’ Brooks Run South Black from West Virginia, and third place to Alpha Maxxim Blue from Virginia.

Skills’ training has been recognized as an essential component in the training of mine rescue teams. In December 2013, MSHA issued [new guidance on the certification of rescue teams](#) that required specific skills training for the first time.

“The skills competition held this week is a model for a new direction in training, and a testament to the dedication of those who volunteer their time and put their lives on the line. These men and women undertake some of the most risky emergency response in our country for their fellow miners,” said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health.

The MTCC, with locations in Prosperity, Pennsylvania and Beckley, West Virginia, provides mine emergency response training, including training opportunities for mine rescue teams and first responders.

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